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Germany Moves Toward Greater Raw Materials Autonomy

Berlin (ots) -

Dutch company AMG has opened Europe's first lithium refinery plant in the eastern German area of Bitterfeld-Wolfen, as the German government pledges a billion euros to support domestic and international raw materials projects.

The refinery is expected to produce 20,000 metric tons of battery-grade lithium hydroxide annually – sufficient to supply around half a million electric vehicle batteries.

This facility represents the first of five planned modules at the site, with the potential to expand the yearly capacity to 100,000 metric tons.

“With the refinery, we are the first mover, making a decisive contribution to securing the supply of the critical raw material lithium for the industry in Germany and Europe,” said Heinz Schimmelbusch, chairman of the management board and CEO of AMG. “The establishment of our own complete lithium value chain also contributes to the European Critical Raw Materials Act and offers greater independence for raw materials and critical materials.”

“Significant active material processing build up is expected in light of the limited existing capacities in Europe and in Germany,” comments Germany Trade & Invest Raw Materials expert Flérida Regueira-Cortizo. “The EU Critical Raw Materials Act and the new EU battery regulations also promote the establishment of lithium hydroxide refineries and a circular economy in Germany. Companies like AMG can definitely benefit from new opportunities in the German battery market.”

The opening of AMG's plant comes just one day after the German government allocated one billion euros via the state investment bank KfW to support raw materials projects. This funding will help ensure the viability of battery production in Germany. France and Italy have already launched similar initiatives.

There is no indication that AMG received state financial assistance for its new refinery.

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